

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with 8/13/08 on Colby C. Nuttall.

The application has been amended as follows:

1-143 (Cancelled).

144. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories includes a programs category.

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145. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories includes a web resources category.

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146. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories includes a recent documents category.

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147. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories includes a recent programs category.

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148. (Cancelled).

149. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the hierarchical links region further comprises a local computing system category for exploring resources locally available on the computing system according to source location of the resources.

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150. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the hierarchical links region further comprises a search category, the search category having a corresponding search heading and search input field.

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151. (Cancelled).

152. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein at least some of the plurality of category headings of the second-level category page are the same as the category headings of the top-level page, and wherein at least one of the plurality of category headings is specific to the particular second-level category page.

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153. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 152, wherein the category headings of the second-level category page include corresponding lists of resources related by a logical relationship identified by the corresponding category heading, such that the lists of resources corresponding to the plurality of category headings of the second-level category page which are the same as the category headings of the top-level page identify a filtered list of resources from the corresponding category heading of the top-level page, the filtering being done according to the logical relationship associated with the second-level category page.

154. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the second-level category page identifies a plurality of tasks specific to the second-level category page.

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155. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the plurality of resources include resources that are local to the computing system and resources that are remotely located.

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156. (Cancelled).

Art Unit: 2174

157. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the link of the customized heading region, upon user selection, allows a user to customize the customized heading region.

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158. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the start page has a default size setting.

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159. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 158, wherein the default setting is maximization of an entire display device associated with the computing system.

160. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 158, wherein the default setting is to view the lists without scrolling.

161. (Cancelled).

162. (Cancelled).

163. (Currently Amended) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the lower-level list of a plurality of resources comprises a predetermined number of resources.

Deleted: claim 143**Deleted:** , and wherein the list further comprises a link to access additional related resources

164. (Previously Presented) In a computing system having a display device and access to local and remote resources, a method for providing a user with selectable links to local and remote resources in a manner that allows a user to easily find and select a desired resource without the user being aware of a source location of the resource, the method comprising:

registering a plurality of local and remote resources at the computing system, wherein registering includes identifying one or more logical relationships between the resources; and

automatically, upon an initial start-up of an operating system of the computing system, displaying a user interface which provides hierarchically arranged links to at least some of the plurality of local and remote resources registered at the computing system, wherein the user interface includes:

a shell interface having a start page that includes:

a customized heading region identifying the start page, the customized heading region further including a link for customizing the start page,

a hierarchical links region having a plurality of hierarchical categories identified therein, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories includes an activity center category, and wherein each of the hierarchical categories is visible upon initial display of the shell interface, and each of the hierarchical categories comprising:

a top-level category heading identifying a logical relationship between a plurality of resources, the top-level category heading having a link thereon which, upon selection, removes the start page and replaces it with a second-level category page identifying a plurality of resources which have the logical relationship associated with the top-level category heading, wherein each second-level category page has a page heading region identifying the top-level category heading selected from the start page; and

displayed in association with a corresponding top-level category heading, a lower-level list of a plurality of resources having the logical relationship identified by the corresponding top-level category heading, wherein the logical relationship of the plurality of resources in the list and on the category page is unrelated to a source location of the resources, and wherein each item in the list comprises a link to a corresponding one of the plurality of resources, and wherein the list of resources associated with the activity center category links to a plurality of activity center category pages, each of the plurality of activity center category pages having a particular theme and identifying local and remote resources related by the particular theme;

wherein each top-level category heading and the lower-level list of the plurality of resources for each top-level category heading is visible upon the initial display of the shell interface.

165. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories further includes a programs category, a web resources category, a recent documents category, and a recent programs category.

166-169. (Cancelled)

170. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 164, the method further comprising:

receiving a signal indicative of user selection of a link in the hierarchical links region; and

taking action in response to the signal.

171. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 170, wherein receiving user selection of a link comprises receiving user selection of a link associated with a category heading.

172. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 171, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises opening a lower level category page, the lower-level category page identifying a plurality of resources having a relationship associated with the category heading of the shell interface.

173. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 172, wherein the plurality of resources on the lower-level category page are organized into hierarchical lists, each hierarchical list being associated with a sub-category heading.

174. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 173, wherein a plurality of the sub-category headings are the same as the category headings of the shell interface, and wherein the list of resources associated with the sub-category are a filtered list of resources associated with the same category heading of the shell interface.

175. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 174, wherein the list of resources are filtered according to a relationship associated with the category heading.

176. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 173, the method further comprising receiving user selection indicative of link associated with a category sub-heading and, in response, taking action to open a still lower-level sub-category page identifying a plurality of resources having a relationship associated with the sub-category heading of the category page.

177. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 170, wherein receiving user selection of a link comprises receiving user selection of a resource from one of the lists of the plurality of resources.

178. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises opening a resource.

179. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises starting an application associated with a selected resource.

180. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises opening a folder.

181. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises opening a lower-level page.

182. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises creating a document.

183. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises using a resource as a target.

184. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises associating metadata with a resource.

185. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 177, wherein taking action in response to the signal comprises displaying settings of an external device.

186. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein the shell interface is programmed according to an HTML format.

187. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 164, the method further comprising:

receiving user selection of a start button on a desktop of the computing system,
and

wherein displaying the user interface is performed in response to receiving the user selection of the start button.

188. (Previously Presented) A method as recited in claim 164, wherein displaying the user interface is performed automatically upon start-up of the computing system.

189. (Previously Presented) A computer readable medium having computer executable-instructions that when implemented by a computing system, cause the computing system to perform the method recited in claim 164.

190. (Currently Amended) A computing system for providing a user with selectable links to access local and remote resources in a manner that allows a user to easily find and select a desired resource without the user being aware of a source location of the resource, the computing system comprising:

a processing unit;

one or more storage media having computer-executable instructions executable by the processing unit, the computer-executable instructions including:

an operating system; and

a shell user interface within the operating system, the shell user interface within the operating system being configured to be displayed automatically, upon initial start-up of the operating system, wherein the shell user interface comprises a start page that includes:

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a customized heading region identifying the start page, the customized heading region further including a link for customizing the start page;

a hierarchical links region having a plurality of hierarchical categories therein, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories includes an activity center category, and wherein each of the hierarchical categories is visible upon initial display of the shell user interface, and each of the hierarchical categories comprising:

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a top-level category heading identifying a logical relationship between a plurality of resources, the top-level category heading having a link thereon which, upon selection, removes the start page and replaces it with a second-level category page identifying a plurality of resources which have the logical relationship associated with the top-level category heading, wherein each second-level category page has a page heading region identifying the top-level category heading selected from the start page; and

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displayed in association with a corresponding top-level category heading, a lower-level list of a plurality resources having the logical relationship identified by the corresponding top-level category heading, wherein the logical relationship of the plurality of resources in the list and on the category page is unrelated to a source location of the resources, and wherein each item in the list comprises a link to a corresponding one of the plurality of resources, and wherein the list of resources associated with the activity center category links to a plurality of activity center category pages, each of the plurality of activity center category pages having a particular theme and identifying local and remote resources related by the particular theme;

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wherein each top-level category heading and the lower-level list of a plurality of resources for each top-level category heading is visible upon the initial display of the shell interface;

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a storage device storing the plurality of local resources;

an association database storing relationships between the local and remote resources; and

a display device configured to render and display the user interface to a user.

191. (Currently Amended) A computing system as recited in claim 189, the system further comprising a favorites folder stored in at least one of the storage device and the association database, the favorites folder having subfolders therein corresponding to hierarchical categories on the start page.

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Allowable Subject Matter

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: automatically, upon an initial start-up of an operating system of the computing system, displaying a user interface which provides hierarchically arranged links to at least some of the plurality of local and remote resources registered at the computing system, wherein the user interface includes:

a shell interface having a start page that includes:

a customized heading region identifying the start page, the customized heading region further including a link for customizing the start page,

a hierarchical links region having a plurality of hierarchical categories identified therein, wherein the plurality of hierarchical categories includes an activity center category, and wherein each of the hierarchical categories is visible upon initial display of the shell interface, and each of the hierarchical categories comprising:

a top-level category heading identifying a logical relationship between a plurality of resources, the top-level category heading having a link thereon which, upon selection, removes the start page and replaces it with a second-level category page identifying a plurality of resources which have the logical relationship associated with the top-level category heading, wherein each second-level category page has a page heading region identifying the top-level category heading selected from the start page; and

displayed in association with a corresponding top-level category heading, a lower-level list of a plurality of resources having the logical relationship identified by the corresponding top-level category heading, wherein the logical relationship of the plurality of resources in the list and on the category page is unrelated to a source location of the resources, and wherein each item in the list comprises a link to a corresponding one of the plurality of resources, and wherein the list of resources associated with the activity center category links to a plurality of activity center category pages, each of the plurality of activity center category pages having a particular theme and identifying local and remote resources related by the particular theme;

wherein each top-level category heading and the lower-level list of the plurality of resources for each top-level category heading is visible upon the initial display of the shell interface.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to SIMON KE whose telephone number is (571)272-4062. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th and Alternate Fridays 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen S. Hong can be reached on (571) 272-4124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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